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a tendency for the minimum wage to conform to the trade-union standard wage, to become a maximum as well as a minimum wage—in general a tendency to standardize wages irrespective of individual skill or efficiency.

More or less enthusiastic accounts of Australasian experience have commonly presented the social achievements of these isolated communities as the concrete working-out of preconceived social philosophies. In fact, they have been little more than specific reactions upon unique economic and social conditions. Among these conditions may be mentioned as especially noteworthy the character of the early population, the system of land grants, the institution on a large scale of convict labor, the growth of such industries as sheep-raising and mining under conditions involving land-ownership, and finally social and industrial isolation of a population inadequately supplied with the means of economic exploitation of the immense region in which it found itself located. The Australasians have been too much occupied with the solution of these practical problems to develop a philosophy of social conduct. Such philosophy as they have today has been written out for them by enthusiastic foreigners, and is to them a matter of comparatively little interest.

JOHN CUMMINGS

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*Railway Organization and Working.* A Series of Lectures Delivered before the Railway Classes of the University of Chicago: Edited by ERNEST RITSON DEWSNUP. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1906. 8vo, pp. xii+498.

This volume contains a series of twenty-five papers or lectures, prepared by nearly as many different authors; and an appendix containing six special class topics. Ten diagrams are introduced to illustrate various chapters, and the purpose and scope of the whole volume are briefly set forth in a preface by the editor.

The academic study of railway transportation has sometimes been made a study of speculations and theories, more or less remotely connected with real transportation problems. Men have sometimes talked and written glibly concerning the theory of railway rates before they had seen a rate sheet or had acquired even a superficial knowledge of what a classification was like. Well-rounded periods have been devoted to generalities regarding the relative merits of private and public ownership when the author

thereof was clearly unfamiliar with the actual workings of either. To all persons who suffer from tendencies of this kind the present volume is an excellent antidote, for in it one will find a plain, matter-of-fact statement of what railway organization and railway workings are and mean. Excepting the chapter on Canadian railways, the volume contains practically no history. There is very little on rates, and nothing on finance. What, then, is to be found in this book of nearly five hundred pages? The reader may find therein a chapter on railway law, three chapters on the passenger traffic, six on freight traffic and how freight is handled, eight on construction and operation, four on auditing and statistics, one on railway education. Every chapter bears the impress of freshness which comes from actual experience. Among the contributors are some of the ablest railway men in the country. It is obviously impossible to review the contents of such a composite piece of work, and much less can one venture upon a discussion of so many different views and points of view.

The volume contains remarkably few repetitions, considering the manner of its construction, and few of the contributors have failed to observe the limits of their special subjects. Only occasionally will the reader encounter general "philosophic" observations, which, in reality, are commonplaces that have in some manner made their way into the vocabulary of a practical man who writes or speaks absorbingly and authoritatively regarding his own work, but who has never been able to leave his practical problems long enough to think out a philosophy of his own or to furnish a theoretical background for his practical work.

I enjoyed reading the book. I believe everyone interested in railways will enjoy it. And everyone who reads it will profit by it.

BALHASAR H. MEYER

MADISON, WIS.

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## NOTICES

*Economic and Statistical Studies, 1840-1890.* By JOHN TOWN DANSON. With a Brief Memoir by his Daughter, MARY NORMAN HILL; and an Introduction by E. C. K. GONNER, London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1906. 8vo, pp. 282.

Of Mr. Danson's many economic and statistical studies two only are included in this volume: one "A Contribution towards an Investigation of the Changes Which Have Taken Place in the Condition of the People of the United Kingdom during the Eight Years Extending from the Harvest of 1839 to the Harvest of